

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system for controlling use of a piece of office equipment or a particular resource available through that piece of equipment, said system comprising:
a piece of office equipment; and
a lock control device connected to said piece of office equipment, wherein said lock control device is activated by presentation of an identifier of an authorized user, wherein said lock control device controls user operation of said office equipment by enabling operation of said office equipment or a resource available through that office equipment to said authorized user.
2. The system of claim 1, wherein said piece of office equipment is a computer or computer terminal.
3. The system of claim 1, wherein said lock control device is a proximity card sensor.
4. The system of claim 1, wherein said lock control device is a magnetic card reader.
5. The system of claim 2, wherein said lock control device is connected to said computer or computer terminal via a daisy chain connector that also connects one or more user input devices to said computer or computer terminal.
6. The system of claim 2, wherein said lock control device controls access to a particular application residing on said computer or accessible through said computer terminal.

7. The system of claim 2, further comprising a computer network with at least one network server to which said computer is connected, wherein said lock control device controls access to said network server from said computer.

8. The system of claim 2, wherein:
said computer or computer terminal further comprises a timer for timing periods during which said computer or computer terminal receives no user input;
said computer or computer terminal entering a locked state upon elapse of a pre-determined period during which no user input is received; and
an authorized user may unlock said computer or computer terminal by operating said lock control device.

9. A method for controlling use of a piece of office equipment or a particular resource available through that piece of equipment, said method comprising:
enabling operation of said piece of office equipment or a resource available through that office equipment to an authorized user upon presentation of an identifier of said authorized user to a lock control device connected to said piece of office equipment.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein said piece of office equipment is a computer or computer terminal.

11. The method of claim 9, further comprising using a proximity card sensor as said lock control device.

12. The method of claim 9, further comprising using a magnetic card reader as said lock control device.

13. The method of claim 10, further comprising connecting lock control device to said computer or computer terminal via a daisy chain connector that also connects one or more user input devices to said computer or computer terminal.

14. The method of claim 10, further comprising accessing a particular application residing on said computer or accessible through said computer terminal by presenting an identifier of said authorized user to a lock control device.

15. The method of claim 10, further comprising accessing a network server on a computer network to which said computer is connected by presenting an identifier of said authorized user to a lock control device.

16. The method of claim 10, further comprising:
timing periods during which said computer or computer terminal receives no user input;
locking up or logging out said computer upon elapse of a pre-determined period during which no user input is received; and
unlocking or logging in said computer upon operation of said lock control device.

17. A system for controlling use of a piece of office equipment or a particular resource available through that piece of equipment, said system comprising:
means for testing a physical or biological identifier of an authorized user, said means for testing being electrically connected to said piece of office equipment; and
means for enabling operation of said piece of office equipment or a resource available through that office equipment to an authorized user upon successful presentation of said identifier to said means for testing.

18. The system of claim 17, wherein said piece of office equipment is a computer or computer terminal.

19. The system of claim 17, wherein said means for testing is a proximity card sensor and said physical identifier is a proximity card.

20. The system of claim 17, wherein said means for testing is a magnetic card reader and said physical identifier is a magnetic strip card.